

Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan

Bradford County School District



August 1, 2019

The Bradford County School Board is committed to delivering evidence-based Mental Health services to the students of Bradford County. Mental Health services are categorized into three different tiers ranging from awareness and prevention to intervention and recovery. A referral process for Mental Health services are available to families for students who may struggle with a variety of barriers to learning including social, emotional, and behavioral problems.

Tier 1 programs seek to address mental health issues at the awareness and prevention levels. These programs are designed to be implemented with the faculty and staff and/or the student body of the entire school. Tier 1 programs are not intended to isolate individual cases of mental health need, but provide training and programs in order to create an awareness of mental health issues and a forum for individuals who may need further assessment to be identified and referred.

- Youth Mental Health First-Aid is an 6-hour mental health awareness program designed to train all administration, faculty, and staff in helping adolescents who are experiencing mental health challenges or are in crisis. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, signs and symptoms of a developing mental health issues, and teaches a five-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations.
- All schools will implement character education through various methodologies (classroom management, school announcements, etc.) to assist students with learning basic social skills and manners that will contribute to the overall morale of the student body. More specifically: Skillstreaming Curriculum in the elementary school, Life Skills training through our contract with Meridian Behavioral Health for secondary, Zones of Regulation in our elementary schools, and check and connect mentoring program in the secondary schools.
- Along with the Mental Health Counselors, School Counselors, School Psychologist, Mental Health Facilitator, School Social Worker, and other contracted services, students will be supported through evidenced based mental health care assessments, diagnosis, interventions, treatment, and recovery services for students with one or more co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and to students at high risk of such a diagnosis.
- By contracting and direct hire of school based mental health service providers we will be able to expand and enhance school based student services and reduce the ratio of students to staff in order to better align with nationally recommended ratio models.
- Students will be provided specific lessons in BASE educational software to reduce the likelihood of at-risk students developing social, emotional, or behavioral health problems, depression, anxiety disorders, suicidal tendencies, or substance use disorders.
- All staff will be trained in Florida's Youth Mental Health First Aid training. Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenges or is in crisis. Youth Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people.

Tier 2 programs, in addition to general mental health awareness, seek to provide mental health interventions and services to specific groups of students. Tier 2 programs are not intended to isolate individual cases of mental health need, but provide small group training and programs to address elevated need as identified through early warning indicators such as attendance, discipline referrals, and grades, and/or marked changes from baseline behavior or mood. These programs are intended to raise self-awareness in the participants and to provide a pathway for individuals who may need further assessment to be identified and referred.

In order to receive Tier 2 or Tier 3 services, the following referral processes will be followed:

- Early Warning System: Monthly, school-based teams will review all students' attendance, discipline referrals, and academic achievement data in order to identify which students might benefit from an increased intensity of mental health support.
- Teacher referral: Individual teachers may refer students for review by sharing information with a Threat Assessment Team member.
- Family referral: Family members of students may refer their children for review by the Threat Assessment Team by approaching any school staff member or SRO and request assistance.
- Self-referral: Students may approach any school staff member or SRO and request assistance.
- Information gleaned from Fortify FL , Go Guardian and/or social media monitoring will also be used to determine whether students pose a threat or are in need of additional mental health support.

At Tier 2, students will be referred to the school's MTSS team in order to identify strategies that have been implemented and were unsuccessful, recommend strategies to be tried next, and determine whether the student should be referred for Tier 3 interventions, based on screenings and data reviewed by the MTSS team.

- Students at Bradford Middle/High School that have been identified as needing Tier 2 services will participate in group counseling with a mental health counselor to focus on a variety of social/emotional and academic success skills.
- At the elementary school, students who are identified as needing additional intervention, beyond Tier 1 will work in small groups along with the school counselor with the goal of encouraging open conversation and surfacing underlying issues that can be addressed in this forum, by the group or the school counselor.
- In both the Elementary and Secondary Levels, evidence-based social, emotional, and behavioral intervention groups will be facilitated by the school counselor and/or mental health counselor, based on need.

The Mental Health Facilitator will provide information and consultation support to teachers, students, and families (as needed) regarding school and community-based supports and services that may address identified needs.

Tier 3 mental health services are those services provided to individual students and their families based on recommendations or referrals from school personnel or family members. While Tier 2 services are implemented in groups, Tier 3 services, while often the same as Tier 2, are implemented individually.

- In addition to a Mental Health Services Facilitator, Bradford County School Board will hire a full-time school social worker, and continue contracts with community mental health agencies to provide screening, evaluation and therapy services to students referred for mental health services.
- Students who are identified as needing Tier 3 intervention services may also be referred to individual counselors or psychologists that are provided by the district's agency partners such as Meridian Behavioral Healthcare and Step by Step Behavioral Health.

Facilitating, Supporting, and Monitoring Recovery

- Early Warning System data, such as attendance, discipline referrals, and grades will be monitored for each student who received Tier 2 or Tier 3 mental health support in order to gauge the impact of therapies and community-based supports.
- Teachers will provide objective and anecdotal data to the MTSS team monthly for all students who receive Tier 2 or Tier 3 supports in order to monitor impact.

- Families of students will provide anecdotal feedback to the MTSS team and/or the therapist working with the student and family in order to determine if improvements at school are also observed at home.
- The subjective experience of the student in response to therapy will be reported to the MTSS team through the therapist or counselor along with any assessment data the therapist is using to drive treatment.

In the event that improvements in student functioning are not noted and/or there is a recurrence of the original symptoms or behaviors, the MTSS team will adjust interventions and supports to address this recurrence.

The district will partner with local agencies to provide support for addressing mental health needs within the district. The district's Mental Health Services Facilitator will provide case management and care coordination services to families in order to ensure continuity of care and communication among medical professionals working with the family, and facilitate access to other supports and services available through community partners and agencies. In the role of case manager, the Mental Health Services Facilitator facilitates communication between the agencies and the district in order to track the student's progress. The district's agency partners provide the following support services:

Section II – Availability of Services / Collaboration

The Mental Health Allocation funds will be used in part to fund the full time mental health facilitator, hire a certified school social worker, and continue to contract with Meridian Behavioral Health and to provide school based services to all schools within the district thereby drastically reducing the counselor to student ratio across the district.

The district will continue to work with the Bradford County Health Department for a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Meridian Behavioral Health to provide on-site community-based counseling services. Meridian has agreed to provide therapists at Bradford High, Bradford Middle, Brooker Elementary, Hampton Elementary, Lawtey Elementary, Starke Elementary, and Southside Elementary schools.

We also contract with Step by Step Behavioral Health to provide outpatient, school-based and specialized mental health services as needed.

Section III - Referral Process/Timelines

Students will be identified through the referral processes outlined above. These referrals will be logged into a database when the Mental Health Services Facilitator receives them. Any student referred for mental health services will be assessed within 15 days of receipt of referral. School based mental health services will be initiated within 15 days of identification and assessment. Community based services will be initiated within 30 days of referral.

Upon referral, the parent will be contacted to schedule an appointment to speak with our Mental Health Counselor. During this meeting, a social history questionnaire and other demographic and financial information will be collected in order to process the referral and to set up counseling. If the student does not have health insurance coverage, steps to obtain coverage for the student will be initiated. As part of their case management duties, the Mental Health Services Facilitator will monitor student participation in therapeutic support.

Section IV - Data Management

Using a combination of FOCUS Student Information System and data kept in a spreadsheet curated by the Mental Health Services Facilitator, the following variables will be tracked:

1. Number of students screened
 2. Number of students assessed
- a. Amount of time from referral to assessment.
1. Number of students referred for mental health services
 1. Number of students who received mental health services (school-based)
- 1) Amount of time from assessment to initiation of services (15 days max).
1. Number of students who received mental health services (community-based)
- 2) Amount of time from referral to initiation of services (30 days max.).

Additionally, the district will maintain records on the number and credentials of all of the counselors and therapists providing services either as direct employees of the district or as contracted providers.

Section IV- Monitoring of Expenditures

- Full time Mental Health Services Facilitator: Bradford county has employed one full time Mental Health Facilitator a licensed clinical social worker. This position works closely with the schools mental health providers, threat assessment teams, and administration to increase awareness, problem solve, and provide interventions for students. Ratio of 1 to 3,000
- Full time Certified School Social Worker: Bradford county is in the process of hiring a certified social worker to provide direct services to students identified as needing interventions, strategies, and possible referral to outside agencies. This position will work closely with the Mental Health Facilitator, Mental Health providers, school counselor, and administrative team. Ratio of 1 to 3,000
- Contracted Mental Health Services: Bradford County contracts with Meridian Behavioral Health to provide four full time mental health counselors. With seven schools in the district this gives the county school based mental health counselors that work closely with the Mental Health Facilitator, Social Worker, School Psychologist, and school counselors to reduce the ratio of students to staff. Meridian is a Tier 1 support. The goal is to provide strategies to improve the early identification of social, emotional, or behavioral problems or substance use disorders, to improve the provision of early intervention services, and to assist students in dealing with trauma and violence. Ratio 4 to 3,000
- Contract with Step-by-Step Behavioral Health: Bradford County contracts with Step-by-Step Behavioral Health for support with observations, Functional Behavioral Assessments, counseling, psychological services, and training. This company works closely with the school, but also has a huge focus on family involvement. The counselors will reach out to the families and provide in home support. Ratio of 3 to 3,000
- Bradford county has interagency agreements with Community Action Teams, Mobile Crisis Units, and Local Action teams to provide a behavioral health staff presence and services at district schools.

- Bradford county has school based counselors who support in the schools. Bradford has 7 school counselors, three in the elementary schools and 4 secondary. Average ratio of 1-500 students.

Bradford County School Board received \$171,526 for the 2019-2020 school year to be expended as follows:
(The district will utilize third party billing when appropriate)

Full time Mental Health Facilitator: \$46,000 per year

Full time Social Worker: \$46,000 per year

Contract with Meridian Behavioral Health: \$70,000 per year

Contract with Step-by-Step Behavioral Health: \$9,526 per year

Signature Superintendent of School

Date: